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## SAINTHOOD

### A REPLY TO PROFESSOR JOHN M. MECKLIN'S "THE PASSING OF THE SAINT," JANUARY, 1919

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In reading the article "The Passing of the Saint" in the January issue of the *American Journal of Sociology* the reviewer was vividly reminded of the following warning of Professor George T. Ladd, of Yale University: "Especially in matters of morals and religion, a vast multitude of men *will not* take their reasonableness into serious consideration; either because they do not wish certain beliefs to be true, or because they have already established their beliefs according to opposing tendencies."<sup>1</sup> The title of Mr. Mecklin's paper pithily expresses the thesis which is stated in the following words: "For the traditional idea of saint is strangely out of place in a democratic age. The term 'Saint' is not in harmony with our scientific naturalism or our militant industrialism." There is a second part to the thesis, viz., the Roman Catholic is openly blamed for his attitude toward the saint, "a strange and almost apathetic disregard for its lack of harmony with the changed conditions of modern life." Hence in the essay of Mr. Mecklin we may well distinguish the statement of a tendency in a certain church and the criticism to which such a church is open for its tendency. If the tendency is not correctly given, naturally the criticism directed against it is misplaced and aimless. Incorrect statements in such an important matter are highly improper if true and reliable information is easily obtainable. In the latter case this misrepresentation and distortion of facts may easily involve absence of fair play, or, to apply the words of Professor Ladd, the author does not wish certain beliefs to be true or he has already established his beliefs according to opposing tendencies.

<sup>1</sup> George Trumbull Ladd, LL.D., *What Should I Believe?* p. 55.

Fairness would demand that the writer study carefully and state clearly and exactly what this church, that is most outrageously and with apodeictic dogmatism criticized all through the article, means by "a saint." The answer is plain to the Catholic. Even to the non-Catholic, a simple book, *Question Box*, by Rev. Bertrand L. Conway, found in the bookracks of many Catholic churches, would offer the following concise definition (p. 538):

A saint is one whose extraordinary holiness of life and heroic virtues have attracted the notice of the Universal Church, and who after the most exact scrutiny into every detail of his life, writings, etc., has been placed on the approved list of God's chosen followers. Except in the case of martyrs, their holiness must be proved conclusively by evident miracles before they are canonized. Of course there are many men and women who live and die unknown to the world, but whose lives are just as holy in God's sight.

The possession of saints at all times is claimed by the Roman Catholic church, because she asserts that, as the true church, she must and does possess the mark of holiness. This mark of holiness consists in this: that the true church, having Christ for its holy author, with his saving doctrine and means of grace, must produce members of extraordinary holiness of life, and that the great deeds and miraculous manifestations which Christ has promised his church must continue to the end of the world.

#### VENERATION OF SAINTS IS NOT IDOLATRY

The church honors and venerates the saints not with any idolatrous worship, but with a respect that is due to the friends and servants of God. The church has always honored the saints from the early times of Christianity, but it required the official pronouncement of the church before such honor could be bestowed in public. While in the beginning such pronouncement was made and could be made by the single bishop, later on all official pronouncements were reserved to the pope. The beatification and canonization is a most complicated but interesting part of church legislation. A summary of the rules which insure the extreme care in such an important affair may be read in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, article on "Beatification and Canonization."

## HONOR BESTOWED ON THE RELICS OF THE SAINTS

The church honors the memory of her saints by honoring their images and relics. If we treat with respect the abode of George Washington or his sword, the pen of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the Liberty Bell in Philadelphia, the insignia and distinctions which our war heroes have received and which will be kept in high esteem after their death by their admiring sons and daughters, and if the writer of the strange contribution preserves with reverence the portrait or a lock of hair of his beloved mother or wife, why should the church be blamed for paying proper respect to the images and relics of her saints? The church is most careful in examining the genuine relics and in putting a stop to the veneration of relics which are not authenticated. Equal care is exhibited by the church in not approving or in rejecting stories on the lives of the saints which cannot bear the light of modern correct criticism.

This is a brief summary of what the Roman Catholic church teaches and practices, regarding the veneration of the saints. The children even of the lower grades in our Catholic schools would readily give this information. We do not accord to the saints the worship which is due to God alone. But Mr. Mecklin most apodeictically states that the "relic worship restored in Christian form almost all the peculiarities of pagan polytheism." Is the writer so densely ignorant or is he penning this statement with malice aforethought?

Veneration of the saints is very dear to the Christian. It is deeply implanted in human nature and elevated into the sublime atmosphere of religious worship because the honored saints excel by their high position as servants of the Lord, by reason of their beneficent influence during their lifetime and of their powerful intercession at the throne of God. Their merits and their example of exalted Christian virtue and their continued interest in their brethren who are still pilgrims on earth constitute what was called the communion of saints, an article of the Apostles' Creed.

## THE FIELD OF CHRISTIAN HAGIOGRAPHY

This entire article of the Catholic faith, as developed in the history of the church, presents, besides underlying principles, a vast field of biography, much vaster than the field of any history of any particular nation and any nation's heroes who are the subjects of biographical and historical research. How vast this field is may be gathered from a cursory glance at the Index to the sixteenth volume of the *Catholic Encyclopedia*. No less than twenty-two pages of four columns each in small print exhibit the general heads and manifold subdivisions of this study of the saints. Besides there are found references to longer and thorough articles on beatification, canonization, hagiography, relics, Bollandists, "Acts of Martyrs," martyrs, martyrology, etc.

It is evident that the professor of the University of Pittsburgh had disdained to even reach out for this extensive source of authentic information. Instead of this he works out from his disordered brain a picture of "the saint," puts up a straw man, and then flings his mud of sarcasm and fault-finding at his distorted production and at the Roman Catholic church.

## SAINTS IN ALL AGES AND STATIONS OF LIFE

Nothing is so familiar to the Catholic as the fact that the saints venerated by the church have lived in all ages, in all climes, and in all positions and stations of life. There are saints who have practiced exalted sanctity as hermits in the deserts, as coenobites in religious communities, as monks like Benedictines, as mendicants like the Dominicans and Franciscans, as members of new religious orders and congregations, which since the time of the Reformation have adopted the apostolic life and the works of charity and education in a hundred and one forms and ways. But there are also saints who were popes, bishops, priests, others who were emperors, kings, empresses, or queens, men and women in the humble position of farmers, workingmen, widows, and servant maids, who have obtained the high degree of sanctity on which God has set the seal of approval and who are honored by the church and her faithful people as powerful intercessors. All these facts ought to be familiar to anyone who attempts to write on the saint.

## A MAZE OF DISTORTION

It is neither easy nor pleasant to follow the writer through his maze of distorted history. In offering a long string of statements, views, interpretations, garbled quotations, covering nineteen pages, the professor inflicts upon the reader who is patient enough to follow him a picture of asceticism, monasticism, church policy, as it is reflected in very odd and ridiculous forms on the convex or concave mirror of Mr. Mecklin's mind. Let the following extracts suffice: He starts with the assertion that the early Christian community was little more than a Jewish sect dominated by two things, viz., the eschatological ideas of the Jews and the opposition to morality of paganism. These Christians practiced only passive virtues. They turned to an invisible order and thus they had no interest in civic affairs. They were indifferent to the state. Property was justified only as a means for the support of life from day to day until the coming of the new order. The family, he opines, was looked upon more or less as an interim ethics, for in the divine consummation there would be neither marriage nor giving in marriage. Hence always the element of *Weltverneinung*, "other-worldliness," self-denial, mortification.

Mr. Mecklin most stoutly affirms that the early Christians had no fighting faith, that intellectual virtues were of little value, that there were no scientific interpretations of the teachings of the church.

We ask ourselves in astonishment whether he has ever read the Acts of the Martyrs with their overwhelming examples of fortitude, and the writings of the early Fathers and Apologists who exhibited an intellectual acumen and evidenced an intellectual superiority both in speech and in writings which would do honor to our present age?

From the persecution and suppression of the early Christians he gathers a theory of morality that has been styled by Nietzsche *Sklaven-Moral*, and the modern professor stoops so low as implicitly to subscribe to the discarded philosophy of the German degenerate. If anything has been defeated in the late war let us hope that the perverse German philosophy, especially Hegel's doctrine on the State as the present deity, and Nietzsche's super-man have met their complete overthrow in our university teaching.

What seems to vex the professor most is the attitude of "other-worldliness." He has not understood the very first principle of Christianity expressed by Our Lord: "If any man will follow me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me." (Mark 8:34; Matt. 10:38; 16:24).

It happened, so the professor asserts, that small groups of early Christians emerging from persecution under Constantine with their ideals could not meet the demands of the rapidly expanding faith. Social activities were entirely neglected by the early saint.

"There was still the sharp distinction between the worldly and the otherworldly, the natural and supernatural." But the church of the Middle Ages adopted secularizing tendencies and she managed that "no saintly ideals flourished that did not receive the sanction and enjoy the sympathy and support of ecclesiastical authority." Here for once the author expresses what is evident to every Catholic and fair-minded student of history, viz., that the striving after Christian sanctity is a work of the individual under the direction of the church. "The otherworldly ideals of Peter Damiani, of St. Bernard, of St. Francis of Assisi, never soared beyond the authority of the pope; but this was only in the secularized church." We must give Mr. Mecklin credit for this acknowledgment of the pope's authority. In this he is unlike Sabbatier, who, in his life of St. Francis, has so reflected the fact on his concave mirror as to make the great saint act against the authority of the pope. But the "secularized church" is another fanciful dream of the would-be historian.

#### MISTAKEN CONCEPTION OF THE SAINT

The position of the mediaeval saint, so the professor continues, was cast in the spiritual solidarity with the world, and this is to him "an interesting paradox." But this again is a conclusion of a distorted mind which he bolsters up with a queer quotation from the entirely unreliable Froude. James Anthony Froude was quite recently discussed by Father Hull in the *Bombay Examiner* under the title "The Arch Liar." "The patriarchal régime of the Middle Ages," Mr. Mecklin asserts further, "brought the

saint nearer socializing than at any other period of history. His sufferings and intercessions and also his superior mind were looked upon as most valuable assets by other members of the community." Their love of the contemplative life is not to the liking of the professor.

This passage allows us to look at the misconception in the author's mind. He views the saint, as it were, in the making, a man who makes a profession of being a saint. This is not the saint in the eyes of the church. The one honored as a saint is one who has finished his mortal career, who, after his holy life has been carefully examined and his intercession and miracles attested, has been pronounced as worthy of the honors of a saint by the church. It is well known that as a rule fifty years must elapse before the process of beatification is taken up.

Evidently Mr. Mecklin has in mind a monk or religious of the Middle Ages, who lives apart from the world and makes the striving after religious perfection the aim of his life. It is true that many of the saints have obtained their sainthood as members of a religious order. But anyone acquainted with the calendar of saints has ready before his mind any number of men or women who have not been members of a religious order. The confusion arising from setting up his own arbitrary and obscure definition of a saint and considering him as one who is a saint during his lifetime adds to the gloomy confusion of the paper.

It is, no doubt, apparent to the people when men like St. Stephen suffer and die for the faith. Examples of holiness of life, as that of St. Francis of Assisi, were not all hidden, but often excited admiration and veneration for the man during his lifetime. The *vox populi* may often have been the *vox Dei*. But we repeat that the saint in the acceptance of the Catholic church is one who after his death has been declared a saint and worthy of the honor of the saint by the church.

#### LEGENDS AND LIVES OF THE SAINTS

Mr. Mecklin's bad humor regarding the Catholic church is in evidence all through the essay; this notwithstanding the fact that he refers with apparent respect to standard Catholic works, like



St. Augustine's *The City of God*; St. Thomas' *Summa*; the Bollandists; Gregory the Great's *Lives of the Saints*; Benedict XIV, etc. But the intelligent reader is forced to doubt whether the professor has really seen and read any of these great publications. At any rate unbiased readers, even Protestants, have obtained different views of the church and her saints from such masterpieces of history and literature.

In particular, certain saints seem to be very displeasing to the professor, who feels wroth at some story or legend that either has no foundation in fact or which he has distorted. Thus regarding the worship of relics, which he says—most falsely—"reproduced in Christian guise all the phenomena of fetishism," he adds in a tone of compassion, quoting the *Summa*, "the custom even received the sanction of the great Aquinas." St. Gregory the Great was by no means the first, or one of the first, to write the lives of the saints, as is known to every student of church history. The *Acta Martyrum* were collected at a much earlier date (see *Catholic Encyclopedia*, "Acts of Martyrs"). The reference to St. Anselm appears flippant and shows that the writer knows little if anything at all of the works of this great doctor of the church. In the quotation from Lecky on the martyrdom of St. Perpetua, who is especially dear to every Catholic because her feast together with that of St. Felicitas has been made universal for the church by the late Pius X, and whose names are mentioned every day in the sacrifice of Mass, the motive of her suffering is entirely missed. The St. Louis who was forced to "shun all female society including that of his mother" is probably misread for St. Aloysius Gonzaga, whose peculiar and almost exaggerated sense of modesty cannot be appreciated by any shallow unbeliever. St. Gregory VII is vindicated long ago in history especially by the German historian Gfrörer (*Gregory VII and his Times*), who from Protestantism turned to the bosom of the Roman Catholic church; and the clumsy epithet "the Politician Hildebrand" simply shows how far Mr. Mecklin is behind the times. The expression theopathic type, "found in St. Francis," is in bad taste and wanting in proper respect. The opprobrious reference to St. Theresa and to the neurotic states of female saints is highly offensive. The latter

criticism is borrowed from other authors, as the quotation marks indicate, but no names are given. We have a recollection that the strange medical work by Krafft-Ebing uses similar expressions, which are by no means grounded on facts but flow from a degenerate imagination of the writer. A priest begging absolution from a poor female servant whose charitable deed he had misjudged is a highly ridiculous vagary of a dreamer, and the subsequent comment on this questionable morality, in which "the individual becomes a law to himself," strangely illustrates the misconception which appears to dominate the author's mind.

#### MISSTATEMENT OF PURPOSE OF CANONIZATION

Canonization and its purpose are repeatedly and most grossly misstated; it is looked upon as an unrivalled instrument on the part of the church in eliminating undesirable variations. In this connection the author pours out his vial of abuse on the church for the fact that "Abelard, a spiritual genius and one of the most brilliant intellects of the Middle Ages, is excluded from the catalogue of the saints."

The high esteem entertained for Abelard is really amusing. It shows how little the real character of this man is known. The name of Abelard has been celebrated by modern writers, we believe, for no other reason than that he was a *vir bellator ab adolescentia*—a *knocker* in vulgar parlance—and had some unsavory relations with Heloise as narrated in his *Historia Calamitatum*. It is for such reasons, it seems, that the sympathy of the modern un-Christian world has been extended to this unfortunate man. Abelard on the calendar of saints! Why, it would be more ridiculous than to have Saul among the prophets. It certainly is a pity that Professor Mecklin was not consulted by the church as to the subjects for canonization. He might propose the name of Abelard if he thinks that miracles have been performed by the intercession of this genius. He might "start something," as the saying is, but he must follow the rules and laws of the *Codex Juris Canonici*.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> On Abelard see Cardinal Newman, *Historical Sketches*, Vol. III.

## CRITICISM OF MIRACLES

The superficial criticism of miracles deserves a passing notice. The old misstatement is revamped that "the miracles are mainly significant as illustrating the credulity and superstition of men; they are sprung from the pious needs of an uncritical age; the miracles alleged to have been wrought upon those who sought help played a most important part in the canonization of Joan of Arc by Pius X in 1909." Of course they did, and if Mr. Mecklin has any idea of canonization and the exacting accuracy as to fact and nature of miraculous events in connection with this process, he would at least respect the belief of Catholics and not only would cite in a footnote Hastings' *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, but would quote, after careful reading, the *Catholic Encyclopedia*. We wonder whether the learned professor has ever heard of the new Canon Law, the *Codex Juris Canonici* which gives all the details of this process in Lib. IV, Pars 2a canons 1999-2141.<sup>1</sup> Regarding the chivalrous Joan of Arc it is to be noted that she was not canonized but *beatified* by Pius X. Only quite recently, March 26, 1919, under Benedict XV the miracles presented for her canonization were approved and as a consequence the canonization of Blessed Joan of Arc is assured in the near future.<sup>2</sup>

If a modern writer wants to acquaint us with the history of banking in the United States and in his book distorts facts and moreover omits to mention the Federal Reserve Bank, we consider his efforts a complete failure and do not dignify the work with a moment's attention. The application to Mr. Mecklin's essay is obvious.

## THE "SOCIAL IDEA" PARAMOUNT

It becomes plain to the observant reader that there must be a sore in the mind from which such Mecklinian offensive and unreasonable statements emanate. Probably we are not mistaken if we gather from the author's scattered expressions that he has a disgust for the conception which he has formed of the saint and

<sup>1</sup> See also *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Supplement, "Canon Law."

<sup>2</sup> See *America*, May 3, 1919, p. 88.

the attitude of the church toward the saint. As a modern sociologist he is naturally imbued with the ideal of human society as the be-all and end-all of all human aspirations. As was seen in the articles on evolution printed in *Social Justice*,<sup>1</sup> everything must be socialized, the school, the church, the club. The church and religion itself are only some means of social control. Saint-hood is in Mr. Mecklin's mind only the outcome of the social values of the age. The saint in the Middle Ages may have been a social factor, but "the saint is out of place in a democratic age." We do not seem to go astray when we say that the entire outpouring of Mr. Mecklin's inconsiderate, unhistorical, and irreverent attack on the saints and the Roman Catholic church is prompted by a strong feeling against the great aim and end of every individual soul as taught by the church, viz., to know, serve, and love the Creator and thus save his soul. This evidently is displeasing to the professor. He would chafe at the thought that there is another world, a supernatural kingdom for which man should strive. The Christian in baptism has renounced Satan and all his pomps, the world and concupiscence, and has given himself over completely to Christ, the Redeemer of his soul. The Christian's life is indeed *in* the world, but *not of* the world. Temporal goods must be for him a means to love God and obtain happiness which he cannot get in this life. This is the only reasonable and dignified view of man's existence and purpose in life. In man's essential duties is included his obligation to society, i.e., the ruling authority, and his fellowman. Only crass materialism and base atheism, such as are found in the writings of modern evolutionary sociologists, can dare to deny this noble and excellent aim of man's life on earth. The saint realizes this aim thoroughly and clearly and shapes his actions so as to make sure of the final destiny.

#### THE PROTESTANT SAINT ATTACKED

The Protestant ideal of "the saint" also comes in for a sharp criticism in the introduction of the article and again in the last pages. Orthodox Protestantism, we are told, emasculated the

<sup>1</sup> December, 1918, January and February, 1919, especially the estimate of Professor Charles A. Ellwood, of the University of Missouri, whose works and articles on "Cultural Evolution" appear in the issue of December, 1918, p. 283.

idea of the saint by making it theological—whatever that may mean. The author refers to the striking vitality and charm of the mediaeval as contrasted with the Protestant idea of the saint, due to “the recognition in the former of the human side.”

We may leave it to our Protestant brethren to ward off the attack launched against them by the professor. We have still to hear of a Protestant saint. Consistently with the reformer’s doctrine there is no such thing possible as a Protestant saint. The *Lutheran justification by faith alone* is essentially unmoral and excludes works of heroic virtue. The very means of sanctification are cut off by reducing the seven sacraments to two. Protestant contempt for saints and veneration of saints puts the saint under the ban. “Undoubtedly,” so we read in the *Question Box*, p. 152, “many outside the body of the Catholic church, and even among the pagans, have been remarkable for their natural virtues, and often they had supernatural faith, hope, and charity, which they possessed by virtue of their union with the soul of God’s church. But the holiness of these individuals of the several churches is not due to the sect to which they belong, but to the Catholic church, many of whose teachings and principles their sect still retains.” In the light of this doctrine we are able to feel rather than to express the cynical and frivolous thought contained in the sentence of Mr. Mecklin: “The Monk of Wittenberg finally broke away from the charmed circle of the Holy Catholic church.” It seems as if the professor had not heard of Denifle’s or Grisar’s *Life of Martin Luther*.

#### SAINTS NOT OUT OF DATE

The contention then of this curious article, “The Passing of the Saint,” is that the saint and the ideal of the saint as still upheld by the Roman Catholic church are woefully out of date, useless, and without socializing influence. And the proof for this scathing condemnation? None whatever, except the writer’s bold and insolent *ipse dixit*. Facts are ignored, biographies set aside, great works not read and consulted, views manufactured, and all this thrown before a gullible public under the auspices of the *American Journal of Sociology*. The oft-criticized infallibility of

the church and the pope is simply like a light of twentieth magnitude compared with this immense self-asserting infallibility of the professor of the University of Pittsburgh.

Which poisoned sources may have infected so injuriously the views of the writer? May not the much-lauded sources of writers like Gibbon, Draper, Andrew White, Paul Monroe, Froude, James, and their class with their historical misrepresentation and narrow bigotry have from early boyhood fed the mind of the Pittsburgh professor with anti-Catholic prejudice? Has he ever turned to the books of the accomplished Cardinal Newman and allowed himself to come under the charm of his style? Would it be too much to ask him to read Discourse V of *Discourses to Mixed Congregations*: "Saintliness the Standard of Christian Principle"?

The Catholic church, spread all over the world, with her three hundred million adherents, honors the Saints with reasonable but enthusiastic devotion. There are nearly twenty millions of Catholics in the United States. Their conviction and practice ought to command the respect of every American who loves liberty of conscience and religion.

#### THE TITLE ITSELF OFFENSIVE

The very title "The Passing of the Saint" is an insult to the Catholic body. Has the writer ever heard of the famous book entitled *The Holiness of the Church in the Nineteenth Century*, translated from the German of Rev. Constantine Kempf, S.J., by Father Francis Breyman, S.J.? The reading of this remarkable book will convince the unprejudiced that the saint is not passing away. He is a reality in our modern age; saints are found among all classes of people; their works have been of unparalleled social influence of the best kind; their lives were heroic and their power was substantiated by miracles which the church examined most critically and approved with her authority. Nay, strange to say, canonization processes are being worked out at present. Let no professor of the University of Pittsburgh or in the state of Pennsylvania be frightened—in Philadelphia, the great city of the State of Penn, in 1860, died a bishop, R. Rev. John H. Neumann, whose acts of beatification are well under way. This extraor-

dinary man was for some time superior of the Redemptorists in Pittsburgh; he walked the very streets of the city where Professor Mecklin is setting forth his attacks on the Catholic church.

A real American bishop is to be enrolled in the catalogue of saints, not to mention many other men and women whose holy lives have been honored by God in such a way as to accord them the honors of the altars on earth.

#### MODERN SAINTS AND MARTYRS

The number of martyrs in the nineteenth century is remarkable beyond expectation. We give expression to our full conviction when we say, that, not ignoring the merit and influence of our Lincolns, our Florence Nightingales, our Booker T. Washingtons, who, as Mr. Mecklin says, "seem after all to have caught and interpreted the universal human values of the age," and in spite of Mr. Mecklin's bold assertion that in these men and women, not identified with institutional Christianity, rather than in Anselm, Bernard, or Damiani, we must seek our modern saints, we give expression to our full conviction that the real saints, such as are produced by the Catholic church and honored by her, are the real and greatest and most influential benefactors of mankind. No greater blessing can be given to an age and to a country than a saint. And the beatification and canonization of the saint is more beneficial to the age and the race than the invention of the steam engine and electric power and wireless and any and all of these natural forces and inventions combined. Such saints may not be acceptable to the world in which they live, they may not be highly regarded by a subsequent worldly nation that witnesses their canonization, but like the sunshine, pure air, and the beneficial rain, they influence the age in a degree that immeasurably surpasses any conceivable factor of material progress.

"The Passing of the Saint"—the title is insulting to the church. For, as we have proved, the true church of Christ must produce saints and must manifest the power of extraordinary signs because her Founder has given this promise.

"The Passing of the Saint" is, to the Catholic, equivalent to the "Passing of the Church" and, in saying this, Professor, you

touch the very heart of the believing Catholic. For the church cannot pass away. She is built upon the rock of Peter and the powers of hell shall not prevail against her.

#### THE CHURCH INDESTRUCTIBLE

Thus to the Catholic the attempt of Professor Mecklin is like the prank of a naughty boy who looks up to the mighty rock of Gibraltar, is displeased with some stain or crack that his colored spectacles report to him, and in his boyish petulancy throws a handful of mud against the rock. Now! There!

*Pace*, Mr. Mecklin, the rain and the sunshine will soon take away the mud and the rock will stand unshaken in its overwhelming majesty and on the top of the rock there is built the holy city, the Holy Catholic church. It is of her that the Vatican Council declared what is so consoling and inspiring to her children and what makes a strong impression on many who are not yet in the fold: "*The church of herself, by reason of her wonderful propagation, her extraordinary holiness, and inexhaustible fertility in all good works—by reason of her Catholic unity and invincible steadfastness, is a great and perpetual motive of credibility, and an irrefragable witness to her own divine mission. Hence it is, that like a standard set up unto the nations, she both invites those who have not yet received the faith to come to her and assures her sons that the faith which they profess is fixed upon the firmest foundation.*"

In bidding farewell to the professor of the University of Pittsburgh we deprecate most emphatically the condescending compassion which he repeatedly offers to the Catholic church for being woefully out of harmony with the modern age. We glory in the possession of an extraordinary light and extend our sentiments of sincere commiseration to the modern professor. His attack has not shaken us in the least. It has been to us, much as we all regret the foul onslaught on the saints, an opportunity to speak on the saints, their veneration and relics, and the Catholic church, the fruitful mother of saints. We feel proud of our saints and we sincerely pity men, and above all Americans, who like Mr. Mecklin rail with prejudice and disrespect against the higher,



purser, and nobler outlook on life, shining forth in the lives of the saints and in the veneration accorded to them by the church.

#### CARDINAL NEWMAN ON THOSE WALKING IN DARKNESS

Cardinal Newman in his discourse, "Saintliness the Standard" (*Discourses to Mixed Congregations*), pictures as living in underground caverns a set of worldly men who never see the light of day; they live in pits and ravines and there they work, there they take their pleasures, there perhaps they die. He says of the English people—and his words are applicable to the American people of today, perhaps with greater significance:

Also! Alas! those great and noble people, born to aspire, born for reverence, behold them walking to and fro by the torchlight of the cavern, or pursuing the wild fires of the marsh, not understanding themselves, their destinies, their defilements, their needs, because they have not the glorious luminaries of heaven to see, to consult and to admire.

But O, what a change, when the good hand of God brings them by some marvellous providence to the pit's mouth, and then out into the blessed light of day! What a change for them when they first begin to see with the eyes of the soul, with the intuition which grace gives, Jesus, the Sun of Justice, and the heaven of Angels and Archangels in which He dwells, and the Bright Morning Star, which is His Blessed Mother, and the continued flood of light falling and striking against the earth, and transformed, as it falls, into an infinity of hues, which are His Saints; and the boundless sea which is the image of His divine immensity; and then again the calm, placid moon by night, which images His Church, and the silent stars, like good, holy men, travelling on in lonely pilgrimage to their eternal rest.

The reviewer recommends, besides Cardinal Newman, Charles S. Devas, *The Key to the World's Progress*,<sup>1</sup> especially chapter vi.

In conclusion let it be repeated: we can hardly express in words the deep regret and indignation felt by the Catholic body that a professor of a modern seat of learning should with such an air of infallibility pronounce his erroneous views and untrue statements regarding the Roman Catholic church in a free republic where liberty of conscience and religion is a guaranteed right together with civil liberty and liberty of education. We regret

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Devas is the well-known author of *Political Economy*, in the "Stonyhurst Series of Philosophy."

exceedingly that misrepresentations of this kind should be set forth in a journal that commands the respect of the academic world, a journal which is read by the members of that church that has nearly twenty million adherents in the United States, a church that has proved her loyalty and generosity in the late war far in excess of the numerical proportion of her numbers and has heeded most promptly and unselfishly through church societies, parish schools, academies, colleges, and universities any and every appeal for assistance made by the government. This church is above all desirous to preserve and to promote peace and mutual respect among all the citizens of the Union. The true American is convinced that such mutual respect is not only a matter of gentlemanly courtesy but an absolutely essential requisite for the well-being of the nation, and therefore the true American does not understand, but feels grieved and indignant that any people who glory in the name of Americans should misrepresent the Catholic church, her doctrine and history, impugn her motives, and express themselves in a way that is calculated to spread contempt and hatred for the entire body of the Catholic citizens. This church is entitled to respect and must not directly or indirectly be deprived of, or disturbed in the right of, religious and educational freedom. Every liberty-loving, patriotic American will refrain from playing into the hands of those insidious and busy-body propagandists who aim at crushing out of existence the Catholic church and especially her schools that have rendered magnificent service to the State, because in a persistent and malicious conspiracy this church is made out to be "the menace" to the American nation.